STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

APPROVED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

FIELD COURSE

INCIDENT RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

MODULE 9
I-300

STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

APPROVED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

FIELD COURSE

MODULE 9

INCIDENT RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

2003

PARTICIPANT REFERENCE MANUAL

Table of Contents

This module discusses the resource management process at an incident. It describes the stages of resource management, responsibilities related to resource ordering, and the use of the Operational Planning Worksheet. The importance of staging areas in the management of resources is described. It also discusses demobilization of resources and considerations related to cost-effective resource management.

Objectives:

1. Identify five considerations associated with resource management and the reasons for each.

2. Identify and describe four basic principles of resource management.

3. Identify the basic steps involved in managing incident resources.

4. Identify the contents of, and describe how the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215) is used.

5. Identify the organizational elements at the incident that can order resources.

6. Describe the differences between single and multi-point resource ordering and the reasons for each.

7. Describe why and how resources are assigned to staging areas, camps, and tactical assignments.

8. Describe the purpose and importance of planning for resource demobilization.

I.   Management Planning Overview

Module 5, Incident Resources, provided basic information about resources that will not be repeated here. This includes:

- Description of resource kinds and types.

- Use of single resources, task forces, and strike teams, squads, mobile field forces.

- Status conditions and changing resource status.

This module will cover resource management considerations related to the use of both tactical and support resources at an incident.

II.   Management Considerations

Safety, personnel accountability, managerial control, adequate reserves, and cost are all key considerations that must be taken into account when managing incident resources.

A. Safety

A basic principle of management is that actions at all levels of the organization must be conducted in a safe manner.

This includes ensuring the safety of:

1. Responders to the incident.

2. Persons injured or threatened by the incident.

3. Volunteers assisting at the incident.

4. News media and the general public who are on scene observing the incident.

Current laws, liability issues, and future trends will continue to place additional emphasis on personnel safety.

B. Personnel Accountability

The ICS provides a unity of command structure which allows supervisors at every level to know exactly who is assigned and where they are assigned. If the management process is followed, and the principles of ICS maintained, all resources will be fully accounted for at all times.

C. Managerial Control

The ICS has a built-in process which allows resource managers at all levels to constantly assess performance and the adequacy of current incident action plans. Strategies and actions to achieve objectives can and must be modified as necessary. Information exchange is encouraged across the organization, though direction is always through the chain of command.

D. Adequate Reserves

Assignment of resources to the Incident Base, Camps, and Staging Areas provides the means to maintain adequate reserves. Reserves can always be increased or decreased in Staging Areas to meet anticipated demands.

E. Cost

Incident-related costs must always be a major consideration. The Incident Commander must ensure that objectives are being achieved through cost-effective strategy selection, and selection of the right kind and right number of resources.

The Finance/Administration Section's Cost Unit has the responsibility to:

- Obtain and record all cost information.
- Prepare incident cost summaries.
- Prepare resource use cost estimates for planning.
- Make recommendations for cost savings.

The Cost Unit can assist the Incident Commander in ensuring a cost-effective approach to incident resource management, and should be activated on any large or prolonged incident.

Resource managers must be constantly aware that the decisions they make regarding the use of personnel and equipment resources will not only affect the timely and satisfactory conclusion of the incident, but also may have significant cost implications.

III.   The Principles of Resource Management

Before we address the ICS resource management issues, we will take a brief look at some basic management principles that apply directly to the process of resource management. Knowing these and understanding how they interact will help in subsequent discussions.

The resource management principles to be discussed are:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Directing
- Controlling

A. Planning

Planning is the management process of evaluating the situation, determining objectives, selecting a proper strategy, and deciding which resources should be used to achieve those objectives in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

In ICS, resource planning is ongoing and directed toward operational periods.

B. Organizing

Organizing is a continuation of the management process after planning, whereby the Incident Commander brings essential personnel and equipment resources together into a formalized relationship.

The organization chart found in the Incident Command System, and which is an integral part of the Incident Action Plan, is the mechanism for grouping functional units into a cohesive general organization. Providing essential staffing is also considered a part of the organizing activity.

C. Directing

Directing is the process of guiding and supervising the efforts of resources toward the attainment of specified control objectives.

A very important part of directing resources, particularly in the high-stress environment of an incident, is providing proper motivation, leadership, and delegation of authority.

In ICS, providing direction is accomplished by assigning responsibility and authority for specific activities throughout the organization. This accomplishes several objectives:

- Uses other people's knowledge and skills.

- Completes the tasks without unnecessary delay.

- Enhances training and personnel development.

- Provides a more meaningful work environment.

D. Controlling

Controlling involves evaluating the performance of an organization and its components, and applying the necessary corrections to make sure that the performance is constantly directed toward accomplishing the established objectives.

The steps in establishing controls over the resource management process at an incident involve:

- Establishing standards of performance based on accepted norms.
- Comparing the actual results with the established standards.

- Taking corrective actions as necessary.

An important part of controlling in ICS is the continuing assessment of the adequacy of the Incident Action Plan.

IV.   Resource Management Process

The incident resource management process includes several interactive activities.

- Establishing resource needs

- Resource ordering

- Check-in process

- Resource use

- Resource demobilization.

These steps will be the focus of the next section.

A. Establishing Resource Needs

1. Resource Needs Planning

Sound planning to determine resource needs is essential at all stages of an incident. It is particularly critical during the initial stages of an incident. Mistakes made at this point may compound and complicate all further actions.

In the Incident Command System, there is an effective ten step planning process that provides a framework for determining the resource needs at all levels of the organization. The planning process will be the subject of Module 11.

a. Operational Planning Worksheet

The Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215) is a planning tool used during the planning meeting.

It provides information on:

- Incident work location

- Work assignments

- Kind and type of resources needed
- Current availability of incident resources

- Reporting location

- Requested arrival time for additional resources.

By using the worksheet, planners can show specific work assignments, kind and type of resources required, show resources on hand and resources needed. The Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215) can also help to identify surplus resources that can be released or moved to other locations on the incident.

An Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215) is shown in the next diagram. Note that this form is a planning tool. It is not intended to be a resource order form. However the information it contains can at the end of the planning meeting be transferred to resource order forms, and also be used to complete Division and Group Assignment lists for the Incident Action Plan.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING WORKSHEET (ICS 215) SAMPLE (This worksheet example is incomplete)							
Div/ Groups/ Other	**Work Assignments**		**Resources**				
			Police Units	Fire Company's	Ambulances	Electric Crews	Gas Crews
A	Search all structures from 5th	Req.	7	6			
	to 7th Street between Oak and	Have	3	2			
	Elm	Need	**4**	**4**			
Utility	Shut down all electric and gas	Req.		1		5	3
	utilities in Divisions A & B	Have		0		1	0
Group		Need		**1**		**4**	**3**
B	Evacuate Mercy Hospital and	Req.	5	6	7		
	Courtney Convalescent Home	Have	3	2	2		
		Need	**2**	**4**	**5**		
C	Contain fire at Super-Shop	Req.	2	5	1	1	1
	Shopping Complex	Have	0	0	0	0	0
		Need	**2**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**1**
ICS 215 (Sample)							
	Total Resources Required		14	18	8	6	4
	Total Resources on Hand		6	4	2	1	0
	Total Resources Needed		**8**	**14**	**6**	**5**	**4**

Some agencies that regularly use the planning worksheet have prepared it in a larger format on various sizes of white board.

This makes the worksheet visible to a larger audience at planning meetings.

On larger incidents, the Operational Planning Worksheet should always be used to determine what tactical resources are needed.

2. Organizing for Resource Needs

In ICS, the Incident Commander organizes the incident by bringing essential personnel and equipment resources together into a formalized and cohesive relationship.

The ICS organization developed for each operational period establishes essential chain of command relationships, and provides the framework for all resource assignments on an incident.

- Personnel resources should be assigned to functional areas within ICS sections based on experience, training, and past performance.

- Equipment resources consist of both the equipment and the personnel to operate the equipment. This includes aviation resources.

Changes to the ICS organization can be made as required. When possible, it is desirable to make changes to coincide with the next operational period, but it is not essential to wait until the next operational period.

B. Resource Ordering

1. Acquiring Resources

Usually, all incidents will have an initial commitment of resources assigned. Resources can include key supervisory personnel often referred to as "overhead" (more correctly as management), and personnel and equipment assigned as tactical resources.

The initial complement of resources may include only one or two additional units. If only a few resources are to be added, they can easily be listed using the Incident Briefing Form (ICS 201).

As incidents grow in size and/or complexity, more tactical resources may be required and the Incident Commander may augment existing resources with additional personnel and equipment. As a consequence, more supervisory and support personnel may be needed to support operational activities and maintain adequate span of control. The planning for additional resources now becomes more complex.

We will now examine how resources are ordered for a growing incident. To do this, we will assume that the planning meeting has been conducted, an Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215) has been prepared (at least for larger incidents), and a resource order has been prepared.

On large, complex incidents extending over several operational periods, many resource orders may be executed.

a. Resource Ordering from the Incident

At any incident, the procedure for ordering additional resources will depend on what parts of the incident's organizational structure have been activated at the time the ordering is done.

b. Responsibility for Ordering Resources

Within the ICS organization, three organizational elements are authorized to place resource orders.

If the incident organization is small and General Staff positions have not been filled, then the Incident Commander will personally request the additional resources from the home agency dispatch center.

If the Logistics Section Chief position has been filled, then the Logistics Chief has the delegated authority to place the resource order after the order has been approved by the Incident Commander.

On larger incidents, where the Logistics Section contains a Supply Unit, the Supply Unit has the authority to place the approved resource order.

Final approval for ordering additional resources, as well as releasing resources from an incident, is the responsibility of the Incident Commander.

c. The Resource Order

Most resource orders will be communicated from the incident to an appropriate ordering point such as an agency dispatch center, Department Operations Center (DOC) or Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Even though different formats may exist, every resource order should contain the following essential elements of information:

- Incident name.

- Order and/or request number (if known or assigned).

- Date and time of order.

- Quantity, kind, and type, (order by Task Forces or Strike Teams whenever possible). Include special support needs as appropriate.

- Specific reporting location.

- Requested time of delivery (specific, not simply ASAP).

- Radio frequency to be used.

- Person/title placing request.

- Callback phone number or radio designation for clarification or additional information.

The resource order is used to request individuals who will fill essential incident organizational positions, as well as to order tactical resources.

2. Single and Multi-point Resource Ordering

   a. Single Point Ordering

   On smaller incidents, where only one jurisdiction or agency is primarily involved, the resource order is normally prepared at the incident, approved by the Incident Commander, and transmitted from the incident to the jurisdiction or appropriate ordering point. The means used to place the order can include:

   - Voice (by telephone or radio)
   - FAX
   - Computer modem or digital display terminal.

   This process of ordering is usually called single point ordering.

   The intent of single point ordering is that the burden of finding the requested resources is placed on the responsible jurisdiction, and not on the incident personnel.

   Single point resource ordering, i.e., ordering all resources through one dispatch center, is usually the preferred method. However, it may not always be possible. Some reasons for this are:

   1. The dispatch center could be overloaded with other activity, and unable to handle this new request in a timely manner.

   2. Assisting agencies at the incident may have policies which require that all resource orders be made through their respective dispatch centers.

   3. Special situations relating to the order may necessitate that personnel at the incident discuss the details of the request directly with an off-site agency or private sector provider.

   b. Multi-point Resource Ordering

   Multi-point ordering is when the incident orders resources from several different agency dispatch centers.

   Multi-point ordering is most often used when there are several different agencies, e.g., law, fire, medical, public works, at the same incident, and all are ordering

resources at the same time. It is important to note, that even using multi-point ordering, the incident ordering authority remains the same as under single point ordering.

Multi-point off-incident resource ordering should be done only when necessary. It places a heavier load on incident personnel by requiring them to place orders through two or more dispatching centers.

Unless fully coordinated from one location at the incident, there easily can be situations involving overlapping resource orders.

Regardless of the method chosen for ordering resources it is imperative that field level command coordinate and communicate this with agency dispatch centers, DOCs and EOCs.

Multi-point ordering is done when:

1. There are several different agencies at the same incident all requiring resources.

2. A certain kind of resource must be directly ordered through the owner agency or supplier (which may not be the home agency). A common example of this is HAZMAT situations which may require specialized private sector clean-up equipment.

3. Agency policy requires the direct ordering process.

4. Most of the requested resources are from agencies or organizations different from the incident home agency, and it is more convenient or effective to deal with resource providers directly from the incident.

C. Check-in Process

ICS has a simple and effective resource check-in process to establish resource accountability at an incident.

The Resources Unit will establish and conduct the check-in function at designated incident locations. If the Resources Unit has not been activated, the responsibility for ensuring check-in will be the Incident Commander or Planning/Intelligence Section Chief.
Formal resource check-in is done on a Check-in List (ICS 211). A check-in recorder will be assigned to each location where resources will check-in. There are five incident locations where check-in can be done:

- Incident Base

- Camp

- Staging Area
- Resources Unit at the Incident Command Post

- Helibase.

Check-in recorders must have an adequate supply of check-in forms, and be briefed on the frequency for reporting check-in information to the Resources Unit.

D. Utilizing Resources

In the ICS, there is both a chain of command (the organization) and a unity of command (each person has one person to report to).

These two factors provide the basis for effective resource management and personnel accountability.

Supervisory personnel direct, monitor, and evaluate the efforts of subordinates toward attaining specific objectives.

Resources, whether they are tactical resources assigned to the Operations Section, or personnel assigned to support the overall operation, are always directed by a designated supervisor or leader.

1. Resource Assignments

Incoming resources will initially be assigned to the following locations at the incident.

a. Assignment to Incident Base or Camps

Assignment to the incident base or camp locations is often done when the tactical resources are not scheduled for use during the current operational period.

For resources which have traveled some distance, the assignment to the base or camps in an out-of-service status allows briefings and a rest period prior to taking on an active assignment in the next operational period.

Personnel resources ordered to fill specific organizational assignments will report to their designated check-in location, which will usually be the Resources Unit at the Incident Command Post, the Incident Base, or another designated facility.

b. Direct Assignment to Divisions or Groups

On fast moving or rapidly expanding incidents, tactical resources are often assigned to report immediately to divisions or groups to support the current Incident Action Plan. In these situations, the tactical resources must always report in with a designated Division or Group Supervisor. Formal check-in can take place later after resources are placed in staging areas or are out-of-service.

While this is often necessary to meet the demands of the incident, it is not the preferred way of handling incoming additional resources, especially if they have traveled long distances.

c. Assignment to Staging Areas

Incoming tactical resources are assigned to staging areas on a three-minute availability for one of three reasons:

- Resources will be assigned during the current operational period.

- Resources are needed to provide a reserve force for contingencies.

- Single resources are sent to a Staging Area to be formed into Task Forces and/or Strike Teams, Squads, Mobile Field Forces, etc., prior to assignment.

As part of the planning process, the Operations Section Chief will decide what number, kind, and type of resources will be kept in staging areas. This decision is based on creating adequate reserves to meet expected contingencies. In some disciplines the Logistics Section Chief will assume this responsibility.

The number of resources in a staging area can change dramatically during an operational period. It can be, and often is, a dynamic and fluid situation, with resources leaving the staging area for active assignments, and new resources arriving.

It is the responsibility of the Operations Section Chief to brief the Staging Area Manager(s) on how the staging area should be managed. This should include:

- Expected number, kind, and type of resources

- Communications to be used.

- Minimum resource levels that should be maintained.

- Procedures for obtaining additional resources.

- Expected duration for use of the staging area.

- Procedures for obtaining logistical support.

The Staging Area Manager must maintain the status of resources in the staging area, and inform the Operations Section Chief when minimum levels of resources are about to be reached.

The Operations Section Chief will then determine if additional resources are to be ordered.

The Operations Section Chief must be concerned about the cost, morale, and political implications of maintaining resources for long periods of time in staging areas. This is particularly true for equipment and personnel that have been hired from private sector sources where significant cost accumulations can take place.

After checking into a staging area, single resources will often be formed into task forces, strike teams or other appropriate groupings for use on active assignments. These assignments may continue for the duration of the incident, or they may change based on incident needs.

Task forces, strike teams or other appropriate groupings formed at the incident should always be disassembled prior to release from the incident. The general rule to be followed to ensure proper accountability, is that resources should leave the incident with the same resource designations they had upon arrival.

In some disciplines the Staging Area function is located in the Logistics Section, resulting in the Staging Area Manager reporting to the Logistics Section Chief.

2. Resources Performance Evaluation

This step monitors, evaluates, and adjusts the performance of the organization and its components to ensure that all efforts are directed toward achieving the specified objectives.

The ICS has a great deal of flexibility for change. Units may be activated when needed, and deactivated when no longer needed.

Many organizational changes, e.g., the expanded use of Divisions or Groups in Operations, or adding new units in other Sections may be done in connection with the planning for the next operational period. However, it is not required and extensions of any part of the ICS organization can be made whenever necessary. Changes must be made known to the Resources Unit to ensure proper accountability.

Performance standards for personnel and equipment resources are based on accepted agency norms. These should be communicated and/or reaffirmed prior to assignments. Results must be constantly evaluated and compared against the standards, and corrective action taken if required. Performance standards will vary in their form and content from agency to agency. They can include job aids, task books, policy and procedure guides, evaluation checklists, etc.

The specified objectives that are to be achieved must also be reviewed as a part of this process to ensure that they continue to be realistic and valid.

E. Demobilizing Resources

   At all times during an incident, the Incident Commander and General and Command Staff members must determine when assigned resources are no longer required to meet incident objectives.

   Excess resources must be released in a timely manner to reduce incident related costs, and to "free up" resources for other assignments.

   On larger incidents, the planning for demobilization should begin almost immediately, and certainly well in advance of when demobilization actually takes place.

   The process of demobilizing resources generally begins at the Operations Section level, where the need for continued tactical resources will be determined.

   When tactical resources are no longer needed, other parts of the organization can also be reduced.

   1. The Process of Demobilization

      On single agency and/or smaller incidents, the planning and the process of demobilization may be quite simple and will not require a formal written demobilization plan or a Demobilization Unit to prepare it.

      On large incidents, especially those which may have personnel and tactical resources from several jurisdictions or agencies, and where there has been a good integration of multi-jurisdiction or agency personnel into the incident organization, a Demobilization Unit within the Planning/Intelligence Section should be established early in the life of the incident. A written demobilization plan is essential on larger incidents.

      In order to determine excess resources and begin the demobilization process, it will be necessary for each part of the ICS organization to evaluate the continuing need for both personnel and tactical resources.

      Resources no longer needed within each section should be reported to the Section Chief as soon as it is determined that the need for them no longer exists.

      The Demobilization Unit, if established, may recommend release priorities for the Incident Commander's approval based upon continuing needs both on and off the incident.

      Agencies will differ in how they establish release priorities for resources assigned to an incident. Also, the process for demobilization of resources from an incident will vary by application area. Participants at an incident should expect to see and accept differences as reflected by agency policy.

2. The Demobilization Plan

An incident Demobilization Plan should contain five essential parts:

- General Information (guidelines)

- Responsibilities

- Release Priorities

- Release Procedures

- A Directory (maps, phone listings, etc.).